

CRS Report for Congress

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Iraq: United Nations and Humanitarian Aid Organizations

Updated August 21, 2003

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Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 21 AUG 2003		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2003 to 00-00-2003	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Iraq: United Nations and Humanitarian Aid Organizations				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave, SE, Washington, DC, 20540-7500				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 13	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Iraq: United Nations and Humanitarian Aid Organizations

Summary

The war with Iraq, which began on March 19, 2003, has now moved into a new phase as a result of coalition forces controlling all of the major cities in Iraq and the end of the Iraqi political and military leadership. Currently, the main focus is the reconstruction of Iraq, providing humanitarian assistance, and establishing a new interim government. The United Nations (U.N.) and other international aid organizations, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), are coordinating and providing humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), headed by the new chief civil administrator in Iraq L. Paul Bremer III, is responsible for the administration and humanitarian efforts in Iraq.

This report provides an annotated list of U.N. agencies that currently have programs in Iraq, key U.S. government agencies, and a sample list of major international and U.S.-based aid organizations that are providing humanitarian assistance to Iraq. Internet links of the U.N. agencies and humanitarian aid organizations are also provided. For detailed discussion on humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq, see CRS Report RL31833, *Iraq: Recent Developments in Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance*, and CRS Report RL31814, *Humanitarian Issues in Post-War Iraq: An Overview for Congress*. This report will be updated as events warrant.

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Iraq: United Nations and Humanitarian Aid Organizations

Introduction

The war with Iraq, which began on March 19, 2003, has now moved into a new phase as a result of coalition forces controlling all of the major cities in Iraq and the end of the Iraqi political and military leadership.¹ Currently, the United Nations (U.N.) and international aid organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), are coordinating and providing humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people, and the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) is delivering thousands of tons of food to the people of Iraq as part of its \$1.5 billion bid to feed the entire Iraqi population through October 2003.²

Former diplomat L Paul Bremer, appointed by the President on May 6, 2003, is the chief civil administrator in Iraq. He also heads the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), which is responsible for the administration of and humanitarian efforts in Iraq.³ According to news sources, Mr. Bremer has appointed a 25-member Iraqi “governing council” that will have control over some former government ministries, which will be the first step toward handing authority over to a new Iraqi government.⁴

Also, the U.N. Security Council, on May 22, 2003, voted on Resolution 1483⁵ to lift the economic sanctions against Iraq and granted the United States and United Kingdom authority to run Iraq until a new government is established.⁶ The Resolution also authorizes U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to appoint a special

¹ For more on the U.S. military operations in Iraq, see CRS Report RL31701, *Iraq: U.S. Military Operations*.

² UN News Centre, *UN Agency Sending 1,000 Tons of Food to Iraq Every Hour*, July 4, 2003. Online at [<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=7635&Cr=Iraq&Cr1=#>].

³ CRS Report RL31833, *Iraq: Recent Developments in Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance*, pp. 5-6.

⁴ Patrick E. Tyler, “Interim Iraqi Government Holds Inaugural Meeting,” *New York Times*, July 13, 2003.

⁵ For full text, see [http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions03.html].

⁶ See UNWire: *Iraq: Security Council Lifts Sanctions; Authorizes Roles for U.S. U.K., U.N.*, May 22, 2003. Online at [http://www.unfoundation.org/unwire/util/display_stories.asp?objid=33886].

representative to Iraq who will coordinate humanitarian assistance and reconstruction efforts.

This report provides an annotated list of U.N. agencies that currently have programs in Iraq, key U.S. government agencies, and a sample list of major international and U.S.-based aid organizations that are providing humanitarian assistance to Iraq.

U.N. Agencies Currently Involved in Iraq

Following is a list of U.N. agencies currently providing humanitarian assistance to Iraq. Internet addresses of the U.N. agencies as well as links to their Web pages on Iraq (if available) are provided.

Office of the Iraq Programme Oil-for-Food

[<http://www.un.org/Depts/oip/>]

Oil-for-Food was a unique program that was begun by the U.N. Security Council in December 1996 as a temporary measure to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. On May 22, 2003, the U.N. Security Council approved Resolution 1483,⁷ which will phase out the Oil-for-Food program after six months, and surplus funds from the Oil-for-Food program will be transferred to the new Development Fund for Iraq (DFI).⁸

The U.N. Mine Action Program—Iraq Update

[http://www.mineaction.org/countries/countries_overview.cfm?country_id=564]

The U.N. Mine Action Services program in Northern Iraq was established in 1997 to locate and remove mines and resolve mine-related problems such as raising public awareness and providing medical, rehabilitation, and vocational services to mine victims.⁹ Currently, the mine action (military and humanitarian) program in Iraq “is coordinated by the Coalition Joint Task Force Commander.”¹⁰

⁷ For full text, see [http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions03.html].

⁸ For detailed discussion on the Oil-for-Food program and recent developments in humanitarian assistance in Iraq, see CRS Report RL31833, *Iraq: Recent Developments in Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance*.

⁹ For current information on the U.N. Mine Action Program, see the U.N. *Mine Action Programme in the Three Northern Governorates of Iraq 2003* online at [http://www.mineaction.org/countries/_projects.cfm?pro_ID=294&country_id=&name=United%20Nations%20Mine%20Action&from=misc%2Fdynamic%5Foverview%2Ecfm%3Fdid%3D11&catsearch=].

¹⁰ For further discussion on the Iraq Mine Action program and the U.S. role, see CRS Report RL31833, *Iraq: Recent Developments in Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance*.

UNICEF Programs in South and Central Iraq

[<http://www.unicef.org/noteworthy/iraq/>]

UNICEF (U.N. Children's Fund) [<http://www.unicef.org/>] is an advocate for the protection of children's rights and is tasked to help children living in poverty, reduce childhood death and illness in developing countries, and to protect children in the midst of war and natural disasters.

U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq

[<http://www.iq.undp.org/>]

UNDP [<http://www.undp.org/>] is the U.N.'s global development network that helps countries build solutions to the challenges of democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, energy and environment, information and communications technology, and HIV/AIDS. The United Nations Development Programme has been present in Iraq since 1976.

The UNDP's Electricity Network Rehabilitation Programme in Northern Iraq (ENRP)

[<http://www.enrp.undp.org/>]

The ENRP's overall objectives are primarily the rehabilitation, installation, and development of the electricity network in the three northern governorates of Dohuk, Erbil, and Suleimaniyah in Iraq.

World Food Programme (WFP) Country Involvement—Iraq

[http://www.wfp.org/country_brief/indexcountry.asp?country=368]

The WFP [<http://www.wfp.org/index2.html>] was set up in 1963 and is the U.N. agency that combats global hunger and supports economic and social development in countries of need.

World Health Organization (WHO) Iraq Country Page

[<http://www.who.int/country/irq/en/>]

WHO [<http://www.who.int/en/>] is the United Nations specialized agency for health.

Other U.N. Agencies—Iraq

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

[http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/index.html]

The OCHA works with governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), U.N. agencies and individuals, and helps them mobilize and coordinate their efforts in responding to disasters, emergencies or a humanitarian crisis around the world.

U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP)

[<http://www.unep.org/>]

The UNEP works to promote the future of the earth's environment. Its activities cover a wide range of environmental issues, including the promotion of environmental science and information and dealing with environmental disasters and emergencies. The UNEP in 1993 issued a report on the environmental effects of oil spills as a result of the 1991 Iraq-Kuwait conflict.¹¹

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

[<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>]

The agency's primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees, and coordinates efforts to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide.

See Background Paper on Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Iraq at [<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rsd/+8wwBmeiSJ69wwwwwwwwwwwwwwwFqwqFqwmFqwnFqwhFqwtFqnfGw3rFqwoFqwzFqwaFqqejhrmFmmDFqm7y-dFqt2lygZf3zmtwwwwww/rsddocview.pdf>].

Following are two relevant U.N. Web sites that provide background information and major documents pertaining to Iraq, and current news and information concerning U.N. and other humanitarian efforts.

ReliefWeb Iraq

[<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/ByCountry/Iraq?OpenDocument&StartKey=Iraq&Expandview>]

This page contains the latest major documents and background information on humanitarian issues pertaining to Iraq.

ReliefWeb [<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf>] is a project of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and serves the information needs of the humanitarian community.

UN Wire

[<http://www.unwire.org/>]

UN Wire is a news service sponsored by the UN Foundation and its sister organization, the Better World Fund. UN Wire provides daily news briefings covering the United Nations, global affairs, and key international issues.

See the Humanitarian and Food Security page for news briefings concerning current humanitarian issues at [<http://www.unwire.org/Channels/HAFS.asp>].

¹¹ U.N. Environment Programme, *Updated Scientific Report on the Environmental Effects of the Conflict between Iraq and Kuwait*, Mar. 8, 1993. United Nations document UNEP/GC.17/Inf.9. This document summarizes the U.N.'s findings on the environmental impacts of the oil fires and oil spills during the 1991 Gulf War.

Key U.S. Government Agencies

Following is a list of key U.S. government agencies that are currently involved in providing humanitarian assistance to Iraq. Internet addresses of the U.S. government agencies as well as links to their Web pages on Iraq (if available) are provided.

Agency for International Development (USAID)

Assistance for Iraq

[<http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/>]

USAID is an independent federal government agency responsible for providing economic and humanitarian assistance around the globe. Information is provided on all USAID assistance programs by country and region.

Following are offices within USAID that also provide some type of specialized humanitarian assistance:

Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)

Iraq: Humanitarian Aid and Reconstruction Assistance

[http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/countries/iraq/hra_index.html]

The OFDA focuses on disaster prevention, preparedness, and delivery of disaster relief.

Office of Food for Peace (FFP)

[http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/ffp/]

The FFP makes commodity donations to NGOs to address the needs of food security through 5-year development projects and through emergency food assistance.

Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI)

[http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/transition_assistance/]

The OTI helps local partners advance peace and democracy in major conflict-prone countries, and works closely with local, national, international, and nongovernmental partners to carry out short-term, high-impact projects that increase momentum for peace, reconciliation, and reconstruction, including encouraging measures to bring the military under civilian democratic control.

Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)

[<http://www.state.gov/g/prm/>]

The PRM of the Department of State coordinates U.S. international population policy and promotes its goals through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. It works closely with the U.S. Agency for International Development, which administers U.S. international population programs. PRM also administers and monitors U.S.

contributions to international and nongovernmental organizations to assist and protect refugees abroad.

Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)

[<http://www.cpa-iraq.org/>]

The CPA is responsible for the administration and humanitarian efforts in Iraq, and is headed by former diplomat L. Paul Bremer III, who was appointed by the President on May 6, 2003, as the chief civil administrator in Iraq.¹²

Department of Agriculture

[<http://www.usda.gov/>]

U.S. International Food Aid Programs provides humanitarian assistance to needy people throughout the world, including poor countries.
[<http://www.fas.usda.gov/food-aid.html>]

See Country Pages—Iraq.

[<http://www.fas.usda.gov/hotpages/default.asp?lstCode=IZ&submit=Submit+Query>]

Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)

[<http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/index.html>]

The OFAC of the U.S. Department of the Treasury administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions based on U.S. foreign policy and national security goals against targeted foreign countries, terrorists, international narcotics traffickers, and those engaged in activities related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The OFAC also issues licenses for American NGOs planning to provide humanitarian assistance independently to the Iraqi people.

See OFAC's Sanctions Program and Country Summaries—Iraq for specific guidelines for NGO registration.

[<http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sanctions/index.html>]

Office of Humanitarian Assistance and Mine Action (HA/MA)

[<http://www.dsca.osd.mil/programs/HA/HA.htm>]

The HA/MA is part of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). It provides supervision and oversight of the Department of Defense (DOD) humanitarian mine action and humanitarian assistance programs for the Director, DSCA. The DOD programs include the Humanitarian Mine Action program (HMA), the Humanitarian Assistance (HA) program, the Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA) program, and the Foreign Disaster Relief Assistance and Emergency Response (FDR/ER) program.

¹² CRS Report RL31833, *Iraq: Recent Developments in Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance*.

Office of International Information Programs (IIP)

[<http://usinfo.state.gov/>]

The IIP, part of the Department of State, is the principal international communications service for the State Department.

See Iraq Update for latest news, including the Administration's plans on humanitarian assistance and fact sheets concerning Iraq.
[<http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/iraq/>]

Selected Major International and Nongovernmental Organizations—Iraq

Following is a list of major international aid organizations that may possibly provide humanitarian assistance to Iraq. Internet addresses of the humanitarian aid organizations as well as links to their Web pages on Iraq (if available) are provided.

Doctors without Borders (known in French as Médecins Sans Frontières or MSF)
[<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/>]

MSF, founded by French doctors in 1971, delivers emergency aid to victims of armed conflict, epidemics, and natural and man-made disasters, and to others who lack health care due to social or geographical isolation.

Iraq Update: Humanitarian Needs in Iraq.
[<http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/news/iraq.shtml>]

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

[<http://www.hrw.org/>]

HRW is an NGO dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world.

Background on War in Iraq. [<http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/iraq/>]

HRW World Report 2003—Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan.
[<http://www.hrw.org/wr2k3/mideast4.html>]

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

[<http://www.icrc.org/>]

The ICRC, established in 1863, is impartial, neutral, and independent international organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance.

ICRC in Iraq.
[<http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/iwplList74/F8EB853A6796F202C1256B6600601EDD>]

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
[<http://www.ifrc.org/>]

The IFRC is the world's largest humanitarian organization, and its mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity.

IFRC in Iraq. [<http://www.ifrc.org/where/country/cn6.asp?countryid=87>]

Mercy Corps International
[<http://www.mercycorps.org/>]

Mercy Corps is a not-for-profit organization that exists to alleviate suffering, poverty, and oppression by helping people build secure, productive, and just communities.

Crisis in Iraq: Mercy Corps Responds.
[<http://www.mercycorps.org/article.php?id=1265>]

Oxfam International
[<http://www.oxfam.org/eng/>]

Oxfam International is a confederation of 12 organizations working together in more than 100 countries to find lasting solutions to poverty, suffering, and injustice.

Oxfam—Iraq. [http://www.oxfam.org/eng/campaigns_emer_iraq.htm]

Selected U.S.-Based Humanitarian Aid Organizations—Iraq

Following is a selected list of U.S.-based aid organizations that may possibly provide humanitarian assistance to Iraq. Internet addresses of the aid organizations as well as links to their Web pages on Iraq (if available) are provided.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC): Statement on Iraq
[<http://www.afsc.org/human-face/default.htm>]

The AFSC [<http://www.afsc.org/>] is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service.

Bread for the World: Statement on Iraq
[<http://www.bread.org/iraq.html>]

Bread for the World [<http://www.bread.org/>] is a nonpartisan Christian citizens' movement of 46,000 people of faith, including 2,000 churches, that addresses hunger in the United States and around the world.

CARE USA: Iraq Regional Crisis

[<http://www.careusa.org/iraq/iraq-war.asp>]

CARE USA [<http://www.careusa.org/>] is a part of CARE International, a confederation of 11 CARE organizations that strives to be a global force and partner of choice within a worldwide movement dedicated to ending poverty.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS): Iraq Humanitarian Response

[http://www.catholicrelief.org/emergency_responses/iraq_humanitarian_response/index.cfm]

CRS [<http://www.catholicrelief.org/>] was founded by the Catholic Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and disadvantaged outside the country.

Church World Service (CWS): Statement on Iraq

[<http://www.churchworldservice.org/news/Iraq/index.html>]

CWS [<http://www.churchworldservice.org/>] is the relief, development, and refugee assistance ministry of 36 Protestant, Orthodox, and Anglican denominations in the United States. CWS works worldwide to meet human needs and foster self-reliance.

Lutheran World Relief (LWR): Iraq Update

[<http://www.lwr.org/mideast/news.html>]

LWR [<http://www.lwr.org/>] works with partners in 50 countries to help people grow food, improve health, strengthen communities, end conflict, build livelihoods, and recover from disasters.

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR): Research and Investigations—Iraq

[http://www.phrusa.org/research/find/find_iraq.html]

PHR [<http://www.phrusa.org/>] promotes health by protecting human rights. Using medical and scientific methods, PHR investigates and exposes violations of human rights worldwide and works to stop them.

U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR): Iraq: Refugees

[http://www.refugees.org/news/press_releases/2003/Iraq/region.cfm#iraq]

USCR [<http://www.refugees.org/>] defends the rights and calls for adequate protection and assistance of all uprooted people, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children/IRC: Iraq Watch

[<http://www.womenscommission.org/special/iq/index.html>]

The Women's Commission [<http://www.womenscommission.org/>] is an advocacy organization that monitors the care and protection of refugee women and children.

World Resources Institute (WRI): Environmental profiles for Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries
[<http://www.wri.org/iraq/index.html>]

WRI [<http://www.wri.org/>] is an environmental think tank that provides information, ideas, and solutions to global environmental problems and finds practical ways to protect the earth and improve people's lives.